

REMARKS

Claim 8 has been amended, new Claims 21–24 have been added, and Claim 9 has been canceled. Claims 8, 10–16 and 21–24 remain in the application. Claims 1–7, 9, and 17–20 have been canceled. Applicant requests reconsideration of the application as amended and in light of the remarks set forth below.

Summary of the Amendments

Claim 8 has been amended to recite a portable device for treating soiled fabric, comprising a dispenser for dispensing a cleaning solution, and a fluid receptacle for locating beneath a portion of a soiled fabric to be treated, such that said dispenser dispenses a cleaning solution from said chamber through said port and onto said soiled fabric to be treated, and said receptacle receives said cleaning solution after it flows through said soiled fabric to be treated. Claim 8 further recites a coupling means for mutually coupling said dispenser to said receptacle when said portable device is not in use. Support for these limitations is found in the drawings and in the specification as filed. More specifically, support for the “coupling means” is found in the specification at p. 13, line 21, through p. 14, line 15, and in FIGS. 8–10 of the drawings.

New Claim 21 is dependent from Claim 8 and recites that the coupling means comprises threads (specification at p. 14, lines 2–5; FIG. 8). New Claim 22 is dependent from Claim 8 and recites that the coupling means comprises a hinge (specification at p. 16, lines 17–21). New Claim 23 is dependent from Claim 8 and recites that the coupling means comprises a tab which engages a recess (e.g. “snapping mechanism,” specification at p. 14,

lines 5–9; FIGS. 9, 10). New Claim 24 is dependent from Claim 8 and recites that the receptacle further comprises an outwardly extending lip configured such that an outer edge of the dispenser and a portion of the soiled fabric to be treated can be received within the outwardly extending lip (specification at p. 16, lines 22–26; FIG. 10).

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The examiner has rejected Claims 8–13 and 15–16 under 35 U.S.C. 102 (a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,048,368 to Tcheou. The rejection is not fully understood, for the examiner discusses *Tcheou* in terms of its teaching “a more effective method of treating a spot or stain on a textile fabric,” and then proceeds to discuss the steps comprising the method. However, all of Claims 8–13 and 15–16 pertain to an apparatus.

In any event, the rejections over *Tcheou* are believed moot in view of the new amendments to Claim 8. Specifically, *Tcheou* does not disclose a device in which a dispenser and a receptacle have coupling means thereon for mutually coupling the dispenser to the receptacle when the portable device is not in use, as now recited in Claim 8. Claim 8, and all claims dependent therefrom, are therefore believed allowable over *Tcheou*, either alone or in combination with any of the other prior art of record.

Regarding the new dependent claims, *Tcheou* does not disclose a device of the type recited in which the coupling means comprises threads, tabs, or hinges, as recited in Claims 21–23 respectively. And *Tcheou* does not disclose a device of the type recited wherein the receptacle comprises an outwardly extending lip configured such that an outer edge of the

dispenser and a portion of the soiled fabric to be treated can be received within the outwardly extending lip, as recited in Claim 24.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 14 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tcheou*. *Tcheou* does not teach the specific enzymes as recited in Claim 14. However, *Tcheou* teaches the use of enzymes generally, and the examiner takes the position that the matter of substituting the specific enzymes would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

The rejection of Claim 14 is believed moot in view of the amendments to Claim 8. Thus for the reasons previously discussed with respect to Claim 8, Claim 14 is believed allowable over *Tcheou*, either alone or in combination with any of the other prior art of record.

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The foregoing is believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated December 3, 2003. For the reasons set forth above, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested, and allowance of the claims at an early date is courteously solicited.

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